

White House Conference On Aging Policy Committee

Miami Listening Session

August 30, 2004

Opening Statement of the Honorable Dorcas R. Hardy, Chairman, 2005 White House Conference on Aging

Good afternoon, I am delighted to be here. I am Dorcas Hardy, former Commissioner of Social Security and Chairman of the 2005 White House Conference on Aging Policy Committee.

I am here today with some members of the Policy Committee: Bob Blancato -- among his many achievements, he was the Executive Director of the 1995 WHCOA so we have an historical perspective; Dr. Alejandro Aparicio, Director of Medical Education at the Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center in Chicago and soon to be the head of the American Medical Association's Continuing Education programs. Also with us today is Dr. Ann McGee, Executive Director of the WHCOA, and several other WHCOA senior staff persons: -- Nora Andrews, Remy Aronoff, and Moya Thompson. I also bring you greetings from one of your own, fellow "Miami-an" Assistant Secretary for Aging Josefina Carbonell who has been instrumental in assisting us over the last couple of months as we have gotten started.

Nearly ten years have passed since the last White House Conference on Aging was held in Washington, D.C. As you look at the 45 final recommendations from that conference, none of them have become obsolete. This doesn't mean of course that nothing has changed. There have been a lot of new, substantive and innovative solutions offered to try to improve and look ahead at the economic and social well being of our senior citizens -- and many old problems have taken different shapes.

And we are also coming upon the aging of the celebrated baby boom generation. Clearly this conference of the Florida Council on Aging and the leadership of Margaret Lynn Duggar and her staff have pointed out as we have- "Aging...It's Booming."

That booming piece is real important to us as we go forward in putting next years' conference together, and we will be paying a lot of attention to that group of what I call "rising seniors" who have special objectives and

expectations they might bring with them. After all, they have more than just sheer volume, which numbers about 78 million.

At the same time the WHCOA is directed to address the issues of today's older population, whom I define as 65 to 105.

Today's listening session is the first one outside the Beltway. I am a firm believer that "Inside the Beltway is certainly not as smart as outside the Beltway." So we are delighted to be here, and to be a small part of your conference.

I always say in my speeches when I talk about the graying of America that sooner or later the whole United States will look like Florida!. We are in the heartland of people and policies that inform everything there is to know about aging.

The Policy Committee wants to hear from you. We intend to use your ideas and those of others outside the Beltway to develop a set of issues for the Policy Committee and its three Subcommittees. We expect to refine those issues into suggested recommendations that will be presented to pre-conference delegates for their consideration and will be discussed at Conference sessions.

In order to most effectively accomplish our goals, the number of final recommendations will be limited as they were in 1995 to no more than 50 that will go to the President, to the Congress, and to all of us.

In addition to listening sessions, we will be contacting as many other interested organizations and individuals as possible in order to understand the very broad array of relevant issues related to young, mature, and older seniors..

We expect individuals at the listening sessions to be talking about current topic areas, but also focusing on the future – where should we be, how do we get there, what should we be doing to get there in style, and what happens beyond. We do have a few years to plan ahead so we are looking at variety of categories and issues, which include:

Planning along the life span
Employment

Environmental (that includes housing and transportation – the environment in which each of us lives)
Health and Long Term Living
Social Engagement
Marketplace

With that, I would like to introduce our first panelists and ask that their presentations be kept brief, and then we will raise some questions. Thank you.

| Presentations by:

Panel 1:

Dr. Max Rothman, Director, Center on Aging, Florida International University, Miami; President, Florida Council on Aging

Ken Brummel-Smith, M.D., Chair, Department of Geriatrics, College of Medicine, Florida State University; Past President, American Geriatrics Society

Judy Thames, President, Florida, AARP